

The decision of Sinclair Broadcasting to require their stations to air an anti-Kerry film two weeks before the election is a violation of their responsibility to serve the public interest, a responsibility that they undertook when they received licenses to broadcast on the public airwaves. According to news articles (including articles in the Washington Post and New York Times), they are representing this as a news event, but from the descriptions of the films and the responses of other broadcast networks to it, it seems clear that this is a political statement, and represents in effect a contribution to the Bush campaign. This is an abuse of power, and should be used as a reason not to renew their broadcast licenses. It also suggests why it is important to avoid any further concentration of corporate control over the broadcast media.